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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

20 MAR 1980

Walter J. Rockler, Esq.
Director, Office of Special Investigations
Criminal Division
Department of Justice
1375 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Rockler:

This is in response to Mr. Martin Mendelsohn's letter to [] of this Office, dated 6 December 1979 informing us that an action had been filed in the U.S. District Court in New Jersey to revoke the citizenship of Tschermig Sobzokov. In that letter Mr. Mendelsohn asked that six documents be made available for use by the Office of Special Investigations. In response to that request, the appropriate offices of the Agency have examined the documents and the circumstances surrounding their acquisition. The concerns brought to light as a result of that review are presented below. (C)

Documents 1 and 2

CIA is prepared to make these documents available for use in this case, and indeed, we would be willing to provide as a witness the custodian of the documents of the Directorate of Operations who can testify that the documents were found in the records system of the Directorate of Operations and that the documents had been in our files since 1952. (C)

However, for reasons stated below, this officer will not be permitted to testify as to the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of the documents; that is, that these documents were placed into the CIA records system by a staff employee who received them from Sobzokov in Amman, Jordan, in 1952. (S)

A statement of the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of these documents would constitute an official admission of a CIA presence and activity in Jordan. As recent developments in the Middle East have clearly indicated, even mere allegations of CIA activity often provoke serious reactions by the governments and citizens of Middle East

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DATE 2004 2005

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DERIVATIVE CL BY []
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DoJ/OST

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countries. (The [] would be particularly sensitive to an official acknowledgement of CIA activity in [])

[] A parallel concern is that any admission of CIA activity in Jordan would most certainly damage, if not destroy, our ability to withhold that information from public disclosure during the processing of FOIA and Privacy Act requests or in other civil or criminal cases. (S)

For the following reasons the CIA witness also will not be permitted to identify the original recipient of the documents. In 1952 this officer was assigned to [] under official cover, that is: []

[] To disclose the fact that an ostensible [] transmitted information directly to CIA would only exacerbate the potential for adverse reactions mentioned above. To disclose the fact that this individual was, in fact [] would have even more serious consequences. First, the individual he was known to have contacted [] could be placed in danger. Second, his cover position would most certainly be compromised. Official acknowledgement of the use of [] cover in [] would in itself be damaging. [] has expressed its serious concern over official acknowledgement of the use of [] cover and the continued willingness and ability of the [] to provide cover to the Agency is, in our view, dependent on CIA's ability to prevent public disclosure of those instances where cover has been extended. (S)

Finally, the circumstances surrounding the career of the recipient of the document and his immediate subordinate present additional concern. As stated earlier, the first individual was assigned to [] under official cover. He remained under official cover for some time following that assignment, and to our knowledge was never surfaced as a CIA employee. Given the success of his cover, a decision was made to assign him to an even more covert status, and for the remainder of his career with CIA, this individual operated under non-official cover. When this individual retired from CIA he did so under non-official cover. (S)

The individuals he dealt with had no indication that he was associated with the CIA, American Intelligence, or the U.S. Government. Consequently, he was able to operate in areas that are closed to U.S. Government officials and to contact and recruit individuals who would normally

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not associate with representatives of our government. Even in retirement the government has continued to make use of this individual and of the contacts he established [

The duty of handling Soobzokov in Amman fell not only to the Agency officer described above, but to his immediate subordinate who also was under [] cover. There is the danger therefore that the use of these documents may lead to the disclosure of the identity of this second officer and his activities. In contrast to the first officer, this individual remained under official cover for the remainder of his career with CIA, and recently retired under official cover. Because our cover arrangements often provide for [

[] Disclosure of the identity of this second individual and his CIA affiliation would cause damage to Agency operations not only [] but in the many other places this officer served. It would, for certain, place his immediate contacts in personal danger, damage the security of installations and operations with which he was associated; and weaken our ability to maintain similar cover. The resultant damage of such disclosure could conceivably be wide ranging--the identification of other individuals could lead to the identification of still more covert employees, thus endangering sources and compromising operations that had no direct nexus to the original employee. (S)

In sum, it is necessary to avoid any action and any use of these two documents that would lead to: 1) the identification of the presence of the CIA facility in Jordan, or identify or describe the activities conducted in Jordan, 2) the identification of the original recipient of the document, and 3) identification of the immediate subordinate of the recipient of the document. (S)

Document 3

CIA is prepared to provide a redacted version of the document for use in this case and to provide as a witness a representative from the Office of Security who can testify

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that the document was prepared by a representative of that office following an interview with Soobzokov in 1953 and that the document had been in our files since that date. However, neither this officer, nor any CIA witness, will be permitted to discuss the full text of the document or the circumstances surrounding its acquisition. (C)

The document was prepared following a polygraph interview conducted on Soobzokov in Beirut, Lebanon in 1953. The interview was conducted at the request of Soobzokov's case officer, the first individual described in the discussion of documents 1 and 2. Accordingly, our primary concern is that the use of this document may lead to the disclosure of identities of this individual and his associates and the details of the Jordanian operation. (S)

Because the interview took place in a second country, the use of the document may also lead to the disclosure of CIA activities in that country, which would damage our relations with that country, inhibit our ability to conduct operations, and place in jeopardy CIA and government officers currently assigned to that country. (S)

The document as a whole contains a significant amount of information concerning intelligence methods. It confirms that CIA polygraphs agents in remote locations and indicates that the polygraph interviewer was not assigned to Beirut, but prepared his report elsewhere, and names that location. Thus, the report discloses the fact that CIA possessed a fairly mobile polygraph facility, headquartered at an identified central location. The text of the document also gives some insight into the methodology employed by CIA polygraph interviewers by identifying the areas of interest to the interviewer, and his reaction to Soobzokov's answers to particular subjects. The text of the report is also potentially damaging in what it does not state--what we did not consider important, or did not know, about Soobzokov at the time of the interview. (S)

Document 4

CIA is prepared to make a redacted version of this document available for use in this case and we would be willing to provide as a witness the custodian of the records of the Directorate of Operations who will be able to state that the document was maintained by CIA since 1956. However, this witness may not be permitted to discuss the full text of the document or the circumstances surrounding its creation. (C)

The document itself is a report of a counterintelligence debriefing conducted on Soobzokov in 1956 by a third CIA

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staff officer. The interview was conducted in the United States. This interview was not conducted during the course of any on-going operations, but was part of the pre-clearance screening of Soobzokov as a potential asset. The interview was apparently conducted under the auspices of an [] cover unit. Accordingly, any discussion of the circumstances surrounding CIA's acquisition of the document would disclose that CIA, [] conducted the interview, and disclose the identity of this CIA cover unit. Such disclosure would endanger the security of the individuals who had been assigned to, or dealt with the unit. It would also damage our ability to provide such cover in the future, as the [] willingness and ability to provide cover is in no small degree tied to our ability to prevent disclosure of the existence of such cover. (S)

The document cannot be released in full text as it contains substantial amounts of information concerning covert installations and personnel assigned to them; identifies uses made of Soobzokov and uses contemplated for him (thus identifying CIA's operational targetting); and identifies those subjects which were of counterintelligence interest to CIA and, by omission identifies subjects which had not come to our attention. (This last point is of no mean significance in that it may disclose a weakness in our counterintelligence capacity.) (S)

Document 5

CIA is prepared to make this document available for use in this case in full text, and to provide as a witness the custodian of the records of the Directorate of Operations who will be able to state that our records indicate that the document was received by Soobzokov in the United States and that it has been maintained since then in CIA files. (C)

CIA ^{will} not provide a discussion of the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of the document, nor ~~may~~ we identify the recipient of the document. (C)

Although the document contains only information concerning Soobzokov's personal activities, the circumstances surrounding the creation and acquisition of the document bear heavily on CIA equities. At the date of the document Soobzokov was engaged in a training program designed to provide an ethnic cadre of trained partisans to fight in a "hot war" against the Soviet Union. This operation was

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conducted under [] cover at an [] installation and was not identified as CIA to the trainees. If a discussion of this document were to disclose CIA's interest in this operation it could place in jeopardy unwitting individuals who may have returned to hostile locations; reveal the affiliation of CIA personnel assigned to the operation; and damage our ability to obtain such cover in the future. (S)

It should be noted that the cover of the operation remains intact, in spite of parallel developments in other litigation involving Mr. Soobzokov. It has come to our attention that Mr. Soobzokov has []

[] His action has led to at

[] Should CIA's affiliation with the project become known, the request's scope will broaden to include our records and the threat of disclosure will increase significantly. (S)

Document 6

CIA is prepared to make a redacted version of this document available for use in the case and is prepared to provide a witness from the Office of Security who can testify that the document was prepared following an interview with Soobzokov by a CIA security officer and that it has been in our files since 1959. (C)
*INCLUDE PARA RE SEC. OFF. NOT TO TESTIFY RE ACQUISITION OF DOC 20
ACQUISITION CIRCUMSTANCES SAME AS FOR DOC 10*
The document contains a large amount of detail concerning Soobzokov's personal history, but also details in some depth his past associations with CIA, and our efforts to establish his bona fides during his prolonged association with CIA. Of special concern is the amount of detail this document contains on polygraph methodology, including specific questions and the analysis of Soobzokov's answers to them. (S)

It is our opinion that the release of this information could be especially damaging in that the information would provide a valuable tool to aid opposition services in developing procedures to defeat our polygraph testing. (S)

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Conclusion

In view of the need to avoid the disclosures described above and to prevent the harm which would flow from such disclosure please advise us before any use is made of our documents or information. In this regard, a meeting at the Assistant Attorney General level may be of value. (C)

Sincerely, /

Office of General Counsel

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KAPOK

REDSOX

Air Pouch No. 64

#1
RJA-A-157

Deputy Chief (DYCLEMATIS) NB

8 October 1952

Chief, []

Operational
Document re T. Seobzakov

1. Attachment (b) herewith is a copy of a document purportedly substantiating the statement made in para 4 of question 25 of RJA-A-152. [] saw the original document.

Secret

attach (b) to RJA-A-757

SECURITY INFORMATION

Translation of above document from German to English

The Mayor of the area

date 30.12.1942

TACHTAMUKAI

PERMIT

The Oberleutnant and Chief of the Circassian Field Police Tscherrim SOOBEZKOV born on 1.1.1912 in Tachtamukai, North Caucasus is authorized to search all villages in my area.

Authority: Special order from German Field Command No. 543 of 26.12.1942
B/Hg. 704/42.

This permit is valid together with soldier book No. 145763 issued by the commanding officer of the 33 and 3D Bureau in Krasnodar on 15.10.42.

SEAL

The Mayor (signature) /Chatit/

Secretary (signature) /Schaudjan/

Air Fouch No. 64

KEDSOX

KAPOX

SECURITY INFORMATION

RJA-A-160

Deputy Chief (DIPLOMATIS) NE

8 October 1952

Chief, []

Operational
Document Issued To
T. Soobskow

1. Attachment (a) herewith is a copy of a document purported to have been issued to Subject in 1944 in Hungary. The original was shown to []

Secret

attachment (e) to RJA-A- 160

SECURITY INFORMATION

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Translation of above document from Hungarian to English

Headquarters of the
Hungarian King's 28th Infantry Army

CERTIFICATE

Soebnokov Isahim Circassian _____ Military Commander, has the
right to reserve this building for use.
The above mentioned building will remain under his reservation
as long as this certificate is not withdrawn.

Kaphaza, 1944, November, 14

seal

signature
Captain Commanding

Secret